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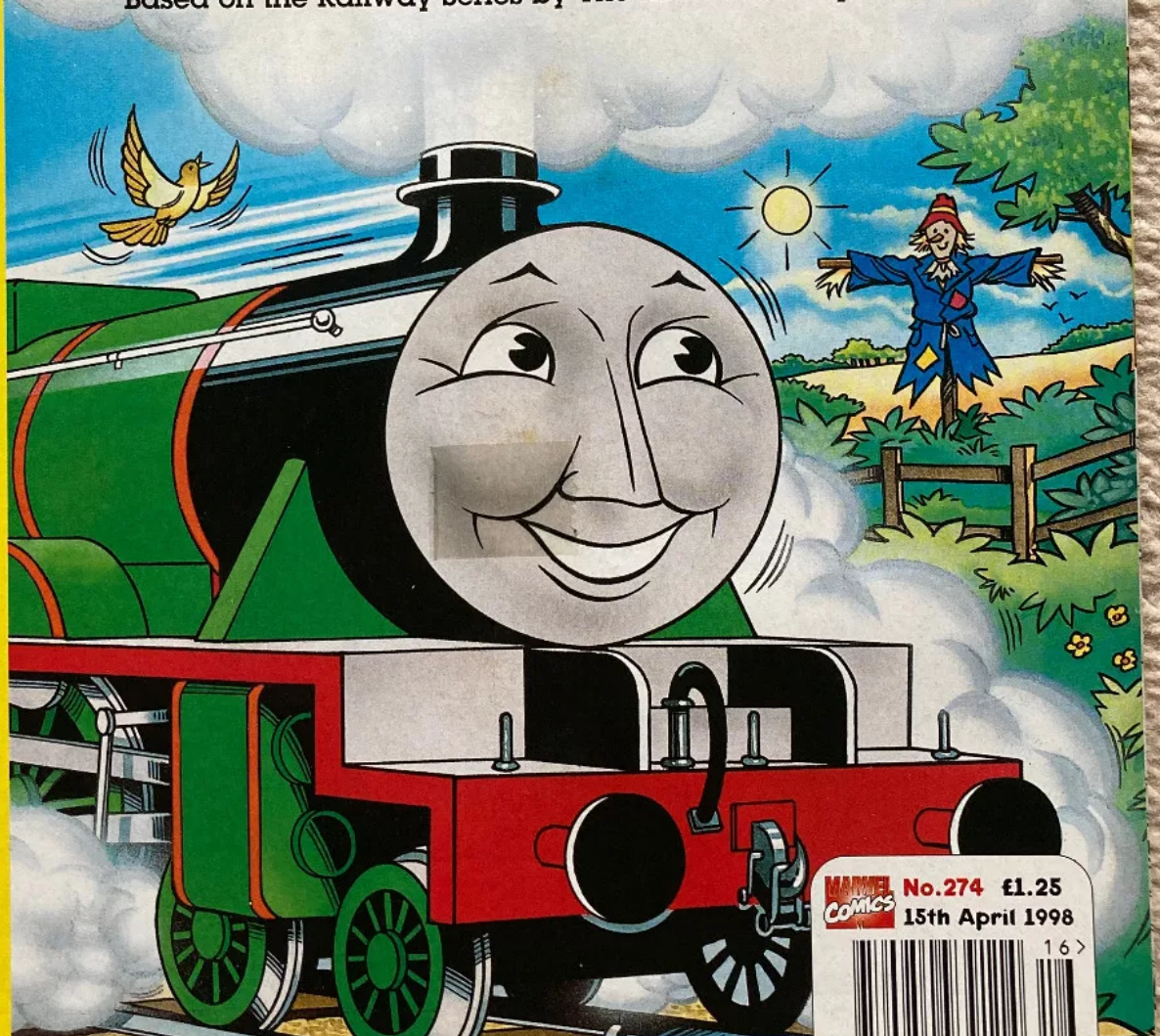
THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FRIENDS™

Based on the Railway Series by The Rev. W. Awdry.



THE TANK ENGINE
& FRIENDS

THOMAS



**Marvel
Comics**

No. 274 £1.25
15th April 1998



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Puzzles • Reading • Colouring

Hello, everybody!

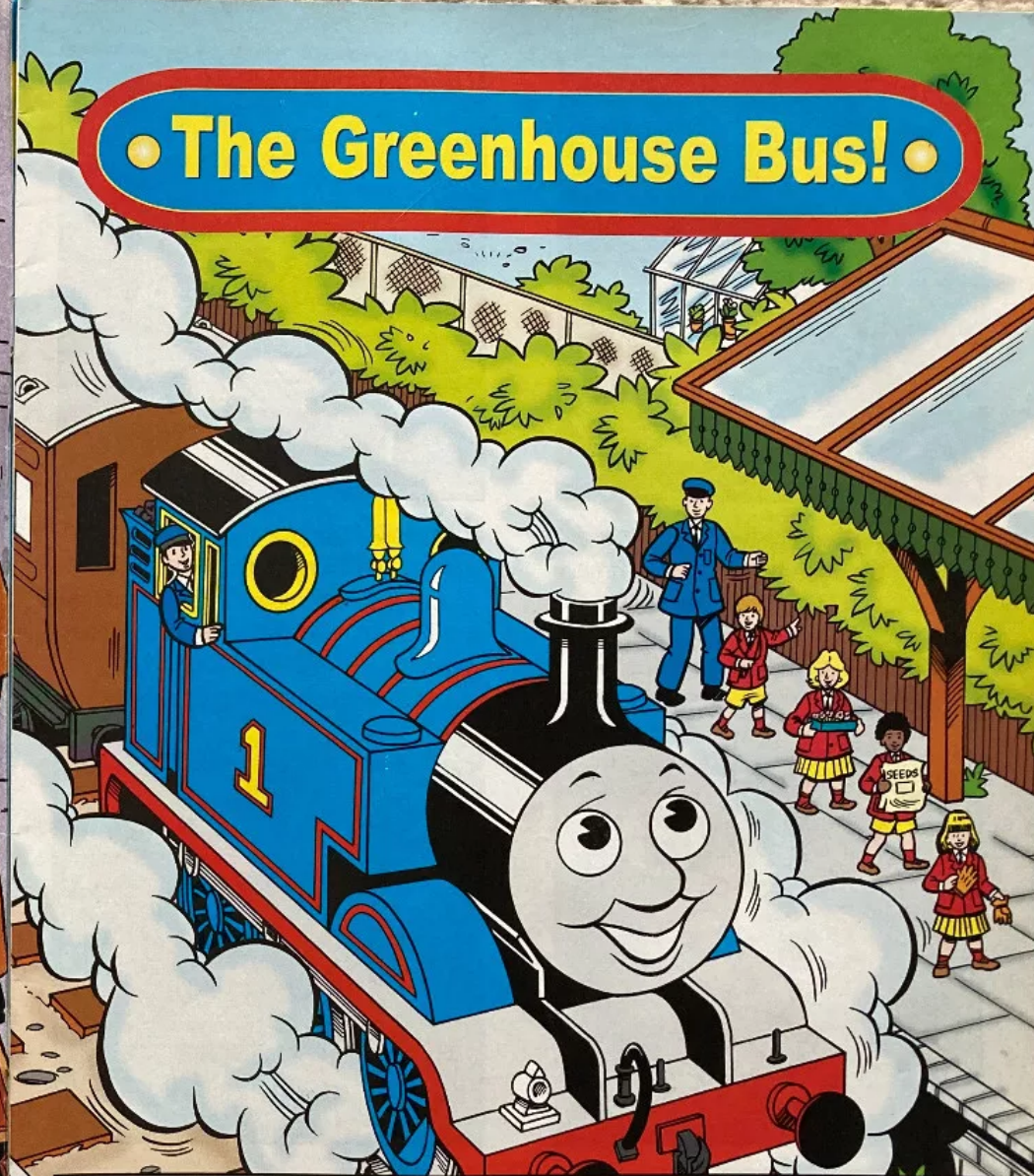
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Island of Sodor Railway
This comic belongs to

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• The Greenhouse Bus! •



1. One Monday morning, when Thomas cheerily delivered lots of children to the station by their school, he was surprised to see a large, new greenhouse in the school grounds.

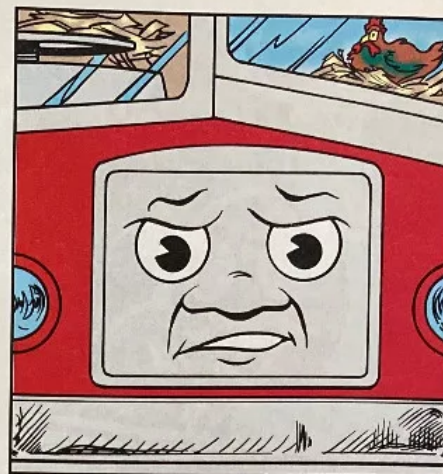
2. Some of the children had brought packets of seeds, gloves and little spades, called trowels, with them. "Our teacher has started a gardening class," a boy told Thomas' driver.



3. "We're going to learn how to grow all sorts of different things," said a girl. The children were pleased to have a greenhouse. Thomas saw that there were already some plants inside it.



4. The teacher arrived to take the children into school. So they waved goodbye to Thomas. "Why are plants put in a greenhouse?" asked the little tank engine, who was puzzled.



7. "I used to carry schoolchildren, too, before I was a home for hens," sighed Bulgy, sadly. "It's your own fault," replied Thomas. "You were wrecked because you behaved badly!"



8. Although Thomas did not say so, he was sorry for the bus. "I'm sure he wants to do something different," thought Thomas, setting off again. "Bulgy's bored being a henhouse!"



5. "Because it has lots of glass," said the driver. "A greenhouse keeps plants warm and helps them to grow." "That's a Really Useful job," smiled Thomas, as he continued his journey.



6. Soon Thomas stopped at a signal on a bridge. Bulgy, the bad-tempered double-decker bus, was still being used as a henhouse, close by. "I've been to the school," called Thomas.



9. That night, Thomas had a strange dream. The engine shed was a giant greenhouse. Inside it, Thomas kept on growing bigger and bigger, until he became even larger than Gordon.



10. But high winds and heavy rain woke Thomas and the other engines. Next day, he took the school train. Thomas was shocked to see a branch had fallen on the new greenhouse.



11. Most of the glass was broken. The teacher arrived and warned the children not to go near it. "What will happen to the plants while the greenhouse is repaired?" they asked.

12. Thomas had an idea and, before long, he delivered the greenhouse plants to Bulgy. The schoolchildren and their teacher went too. They carried the plants on to the bus.



13. "You have lots of big windows," Thomas told Bulgy. "Now you can be Really Useful and keep those plants warm." But Bulgy was not happy to be the school greenhouse for a while.

14. "Even being a henhouse is more exciting than this," he moaned. "With your red paint, you're not so much a greenhouse as a redhouse," teased Thomas. "Pah!" Bulgy scowled.



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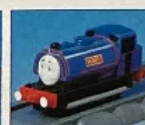
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Britt
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James' Hotel!

One morning, the Fat Controller gave James the task of taking a group of country lovers out to a small station so they could spend the weekend at a smart country hotel. James beamed and began to show off to the others. "Of course, the smartest engine does the best jobs, that's how it should be!" he boasted.

At the station, James saw the smart hotel. "Lucky people, what a

nice place to stay!" he whistled.

Later, James told the others about the hotel and started to show off again. "I've been chosen to go there again tomorrow to take them out on an excursion!"

But the next day James ran into trouble! He broke down right outside the hotel with the people waiting for him on the nearby platform. "Blow my buffers, how embarrassing!" he huffed.

James' driver phoned the Fat Controller to explain what had happened and Thomas was sent out with the Chief Engineer to fix poor James.

Soon Thomas took over the excursion train and as he pulled away it started to rain. He called cheekily to miserable James, "I'll tell the others that you're enjoying a shower at the hotel!"

James' breakdown was quite serious so the Chief Engineer phoned the Fat Controller who said, "James has told us all what a nice place the hotel is, so you can stay there until he's fixed!"

At dusk, the Chief Engineer and James' driver booked into the hotel. "This makes a nice change!" said James' driver, as he waved to James through the window.

They worked on James all Sunday and some of the holidaymakers came to watch.

In the afternoon Thomas took the people out and called cheekily to James again. "I'll let the others

know that you're making a weekend of it!"

By the end of the day James was fixed. "Just in time to take the weekenders back to the harbour!" grinned his driver. Then at the station the people gave James a loud cheer!

Back at the engine shed, the other engines joked with James.

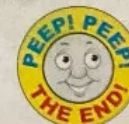
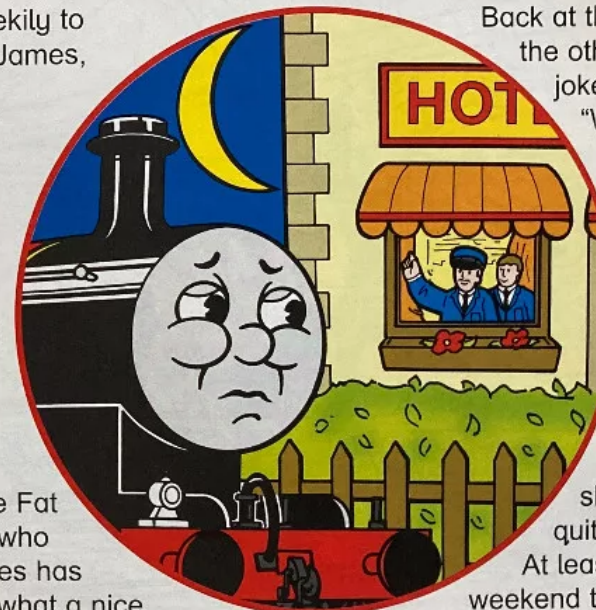
"We could all do with a weekend away, James, but some of us are too busy!" snorted Gordon.

Then Percy chuckled, "I hear the showers were quite good!"

At least James had all weekend to think of a

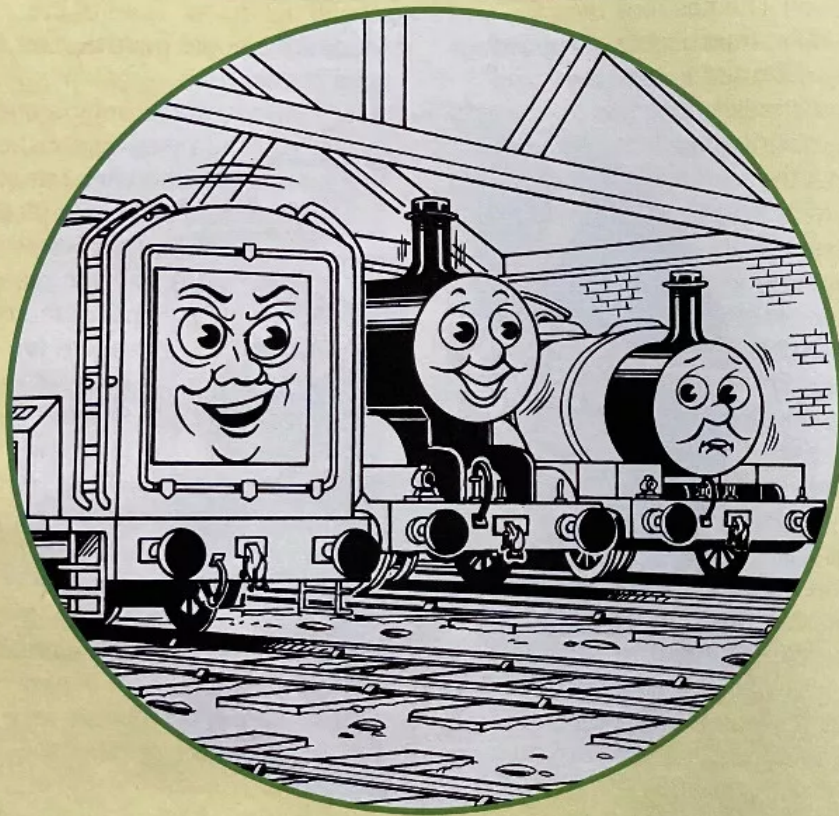
reply so he put on a brave face and laughed. "You're all just jealous of me because you've never spent a weekend at a hotel! I had a good rest, a refreshing shower and met some very nice people!" he sniffed.

The Fat Controller joined in. "Well I'm glad you had a good weekend, James, but I don't want any of you other engines getting the same idea!"



A read & colour story

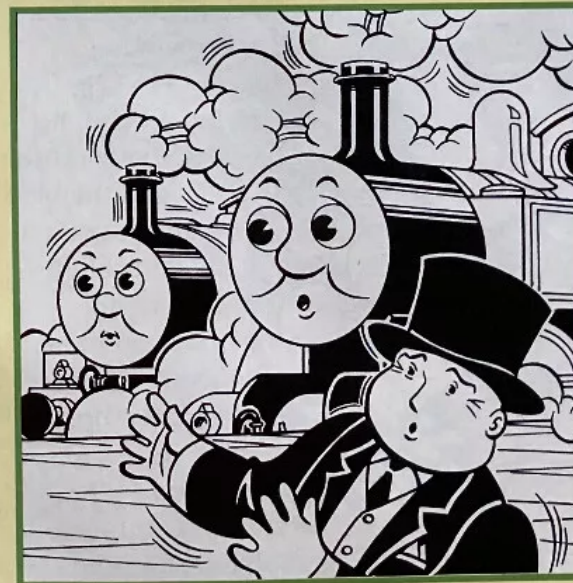
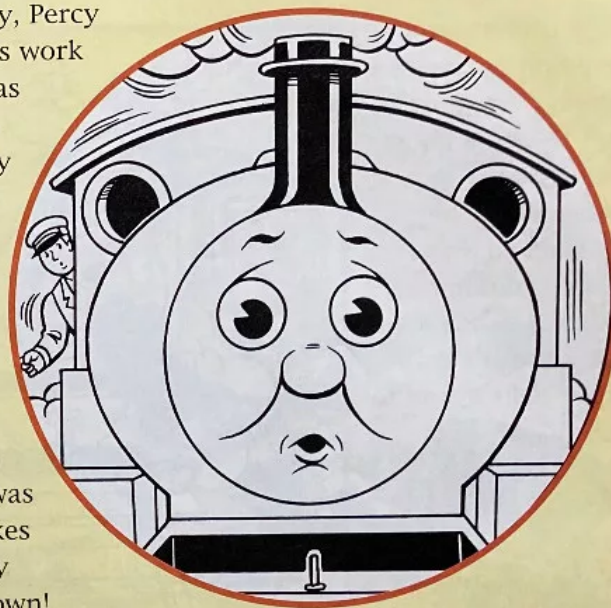
Runaway Percy!



1 One evening, Thomas found Percy looking very fed up. "What a day I've had!" moaned Percy. "Working with rude trucks in the pouring rain! Then Gordon told me off for peeping too loudly when I got home. Sometimes I think I might just

run away!" "Don't be silly, Percy!" said Thomas. "What would you do if you ran away?" "Maybe he could get a job on a ghost train!" said Diesel, unhelpfully. Percy shivered. Perhaps running away wasn't such a good idea after all.

2 The next day, Percy wanted to get his work over as quickly as possible. He was puffing so loudly he didn't hear his driver telling him to slow down. The driver tried to slow him down by using the brake, but something was wrong. The brakes had failed! Percy couldn't slow down!



3 Percy was rushing along at full speed, out of control! The Fat Controller saw him steaming through the Main Station, faster than an express. "My word! What is going on?" he gasped. Thomas cried, "Oh, sir, you must stop him! Percy is running away!"

4 Diesel was also passing by and saw Percy. "He must be off to join a ghost train like I suggested!" he exclaimed. But Percy couldn't hear him. He was racing along faster than ever before, and his terrified trucks were squealing behind him. "Sparks and smoke! We're heading for a crash!" they cried.



5 For once the trucks were right. Percy was speeding so fast round a bend, he came flying off the rails and tumbled head first into a ditch! Behind him all his trucks were thrown upside down in a heap. There was sand, gravel and coal everywhere! It was a big, messy crash.



6 Soon a rescue service arrived. "What's this I hear about you running away?" asked the Fat Controller, kindly. "I didn't run away, sir!" cried Percy, lying on his side. "It was the brakes, sir - they didn't work! Please don't be cross with me!" The Fat

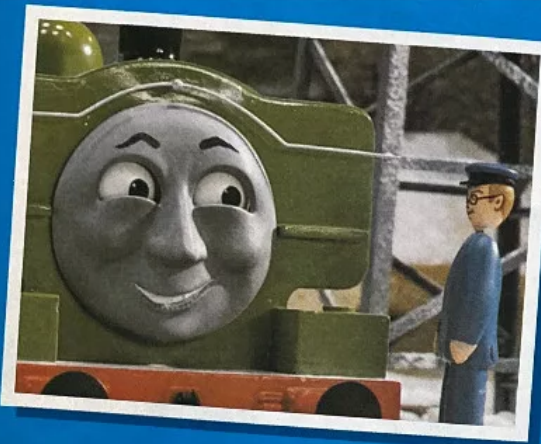
Controller wasn't cross. "It's not your fault, Percy. I'm sending you to the Main Shed for some serious repairs and a nice, long rest." Percy cheered up when he heard this. Running away might sound exciting," he said, "but there really is no place like home!"

The end

Donald's Duck!

Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev W Awdry.

Duck has his own branch line by the sea. He is very proud of his responsibility and he talks endlessly about it. "You don't understand how much the Fat Controller relies on me," he said to Donald. "Quack, quack, quack you go. Sounds like you'd laid an egg. Now wheesh and let an engine sleep," Donald replied, sleepily. "Quack yourself," said Duck indignantly.



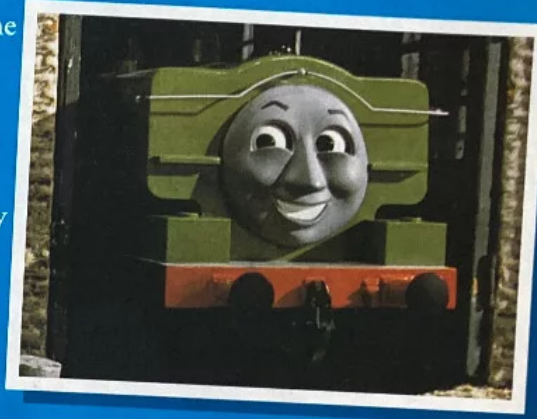
1 Later he spoke to his driver. "Donald says I quack as if I'd laid an egg." His fireman whispered something to the driver. They were going to play a joke on Donald and pay him back for teasing Duck. At night when Donald was asleep, Duck's driver and fireman popped something into his water tank.

2 The next morning, when Donald stopped for water, he found he had an unexpected passenger aboard. A small, white duckling popped out of his water tank. "No doubt who's behind this," laughed Donald. The duckling was very tame and she shared the fireman's sandwiches and rode in the tender.



3 The other engines enjoyed teasing Donald about her. When she finally grew tired of travelling she hopped off at a station where she stayed. That night, Donald's driver and fireman decided to get their own back. The next day when Duck's crew arrived there was a nest box with an egg in it under Duck's bunker.

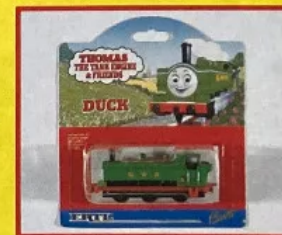
4 "You must have laid it in the night, Duck!" said Donald. "You win, Donald," laughed Duck. "It'd take a clever engine to get the better of you!" The duckling now lives in a pond by the station. She welcomes the trains as they pass by. The Station Master calls her Dilly. To everyone else she is always Donald's duck.



In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read the story "Edward, Gordon and Henry"

Win a model of Duck!

Five lucky winners can win a splendid model of Duck from the ERTL engine range! Just send a postcard, with your name, age and address to: Thomas/274 model competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ. Closing date: April 23rd 1998.



The Easter cake!



It was almost Easter and Stephen and Bridget were out shopping with Lady Hatt. As they passed a sweet shop, the two children suddenly stopped and stared in amazement. "Wow! Look!" cried Stephen, pointing excitedly. "That's the biggest Easter egg I've seen!" gasped Bridget.

A giant chocolate egg, with a bright ribbon tied in a bow around



it, stood in the middle of the window. The children eagerly showed it to Lady Hatt. "I hope we get huge Easter eggs, Bridget," whispered Stephen. "Not even you could eat one that large," she laughed at her brother.

Back at their grandparents' home, they told the Fat Controller all about it.

When Easter arrived, Lady Hatt and the Fat Controller gave the children a chocolate egg each. Stephen and Bridget were delighted, even though their eggs were much smaller than the ones in the shop window.

Later, the children went to the Main Station with the Fat



Controller. They had made Easter cards for everyone. But Stephen and Bridget had a surprise, too. All the engine crews gave them chocolate eggs. There were so many, the children had to carry them in a large bag when they went home for lunch with their grandfather. "I must bake an Easter simnel cake for the railway staff, this afternoon," Lady Hatt told her husband. "I always do." "They've

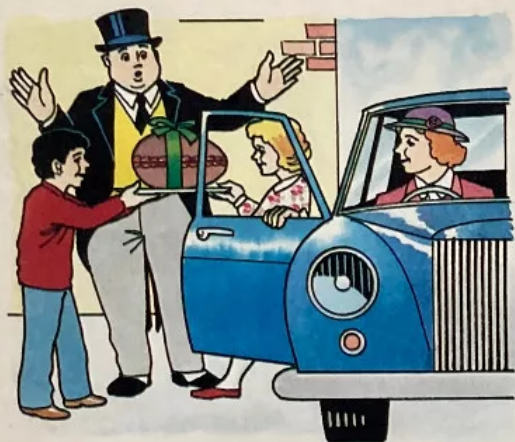
given us lots of chocolate eggs," said Stephen. "It's very kind of everyone. But we'll never be able to eat them all on our own." "It would have been rude not to accept them though," added Bridget. "I wish we could share our eggs with the railway staff."

"Perhaps you can," said Lady Hatt, remembering the huge Easter egg.

She explained her plan to Stephen and Bridget, who wanted to help. So, after lunch, the Fat Controller went back to work on his own. The children helped Lady Hatt in the kitchen.

At the end of the day, before the engines rolled into their shed, Stephen and Bridget arrived at the station with their grandmother by car. Very carefully and slowly, they lifted out an enormous Easter egg. "Upon my word! Don't tell me you bought the one in Wellsworth?"





cried the Fat Controller. "Oh, no, Grandpa," said Bridget. "This is even more special than that."

Soon, everyone was admiring it. "This Easter egg is from us to all of you," announced Stephen and Bridget, proudly. "Happy Easter!" "And the cake is from me," smiled Lady Hatt. "What cake?" the Station Master asked, puzzled. "There's only that enormous egg."

To everyone's astonishment, Lady Hatt began to cut the egg. Inside it they could see there were thick layers of sponge cake and jam filling. "Grandma made the icing for it by melting some of the chocolate eggs that you gave to us. We wanted all of you to enjoy them with us," smiled Bridget.

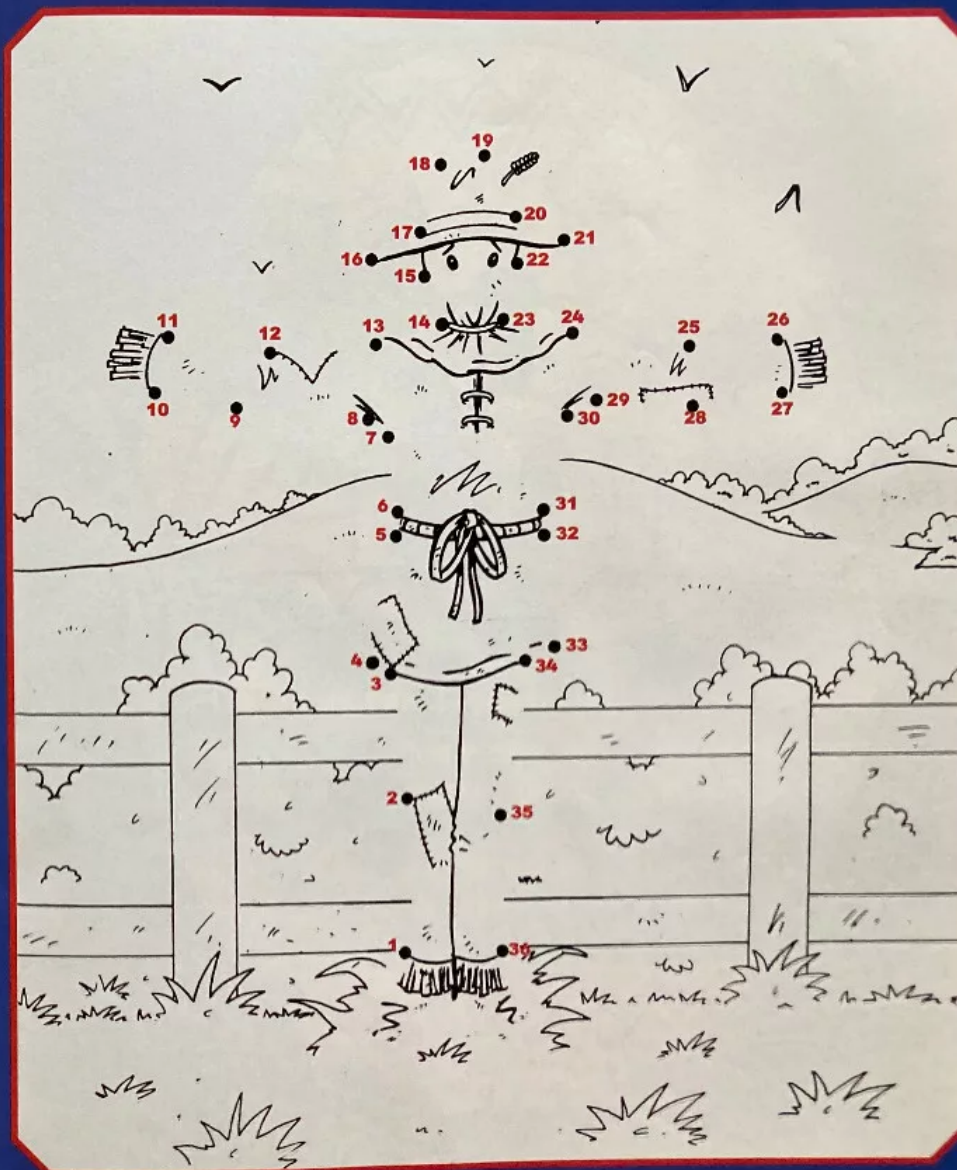
The railway staff certainly did! They thought the unusual cake was a very clever idea and it was delicious too. "That's the first Easter egg cake that I've ever baked," laughed Lady Hatt. "And it's the best Easter cake we've ever eaten," everyone agreed, as they happily ate up every last crumb.

THE END



Dot to dot!

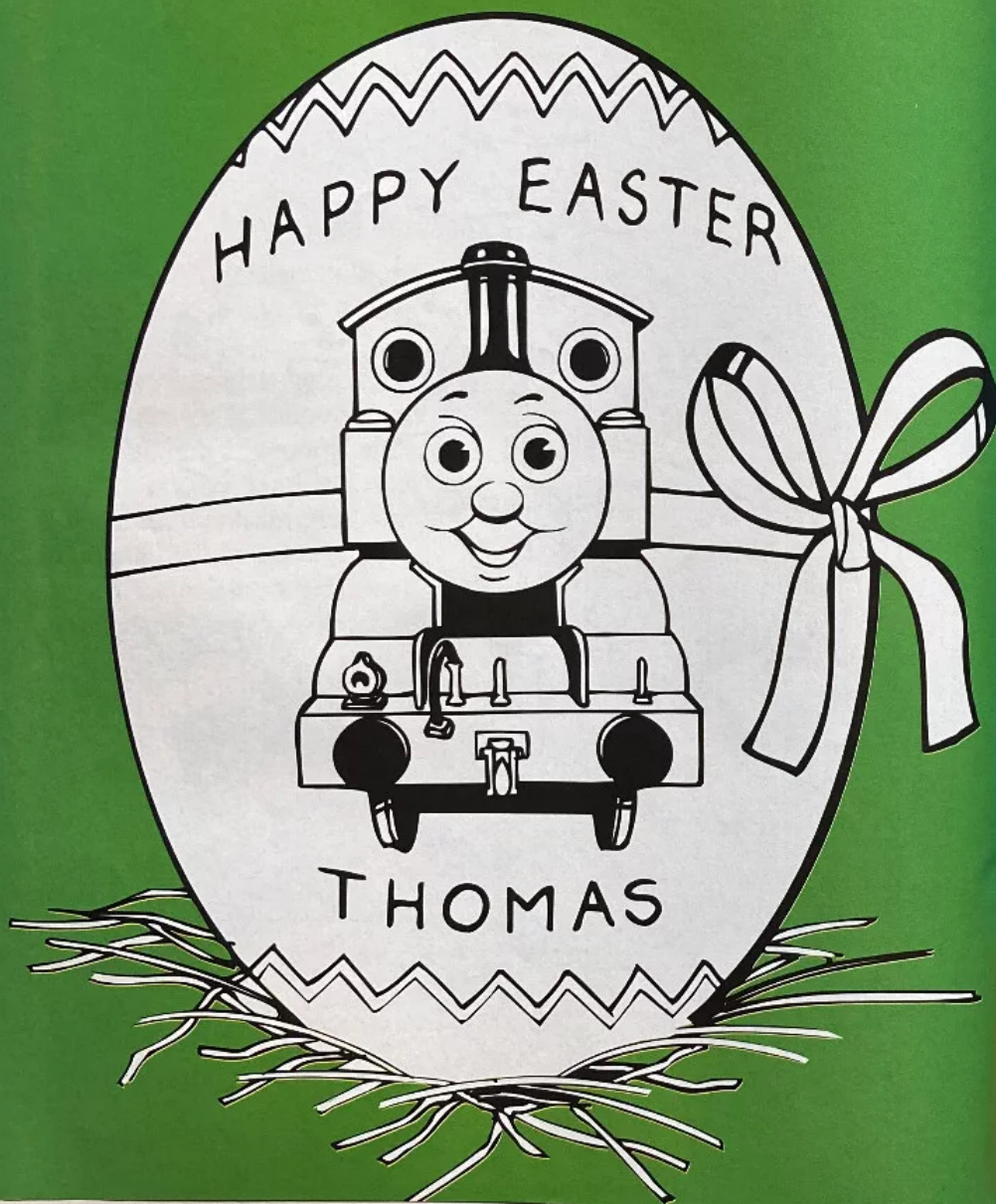
Join the dots to see who has scared the birds away!



Now use your crayons to colour in the picture!

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Colour in and decorate this splendid Thomas Easter egg!



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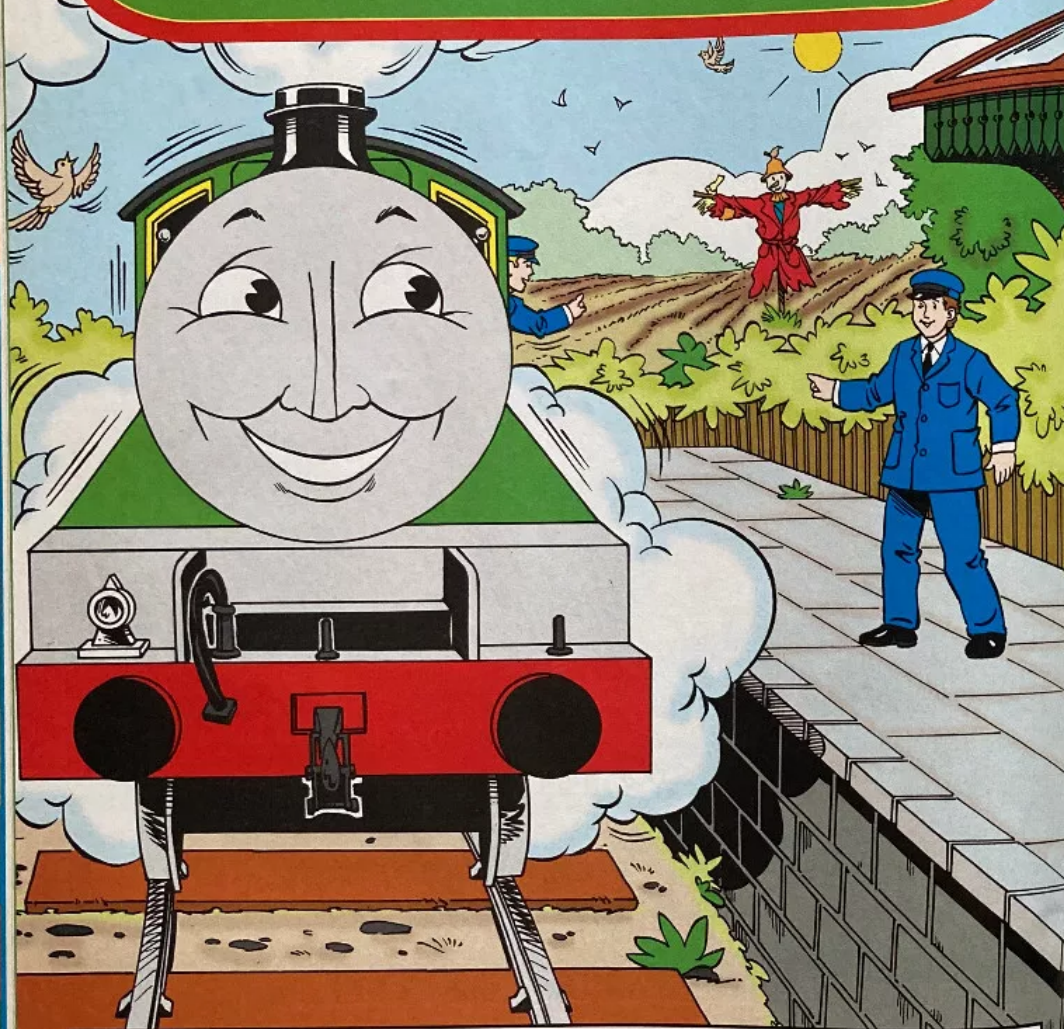
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Send your answers on a postcard along with your name, age and address to: Thomas #274 competition, Heart Fashions and Designs, 37a High Street, Walsall Wood, W. Midlands, WS9 9LR.

All entries must be received by 28th April 1998.

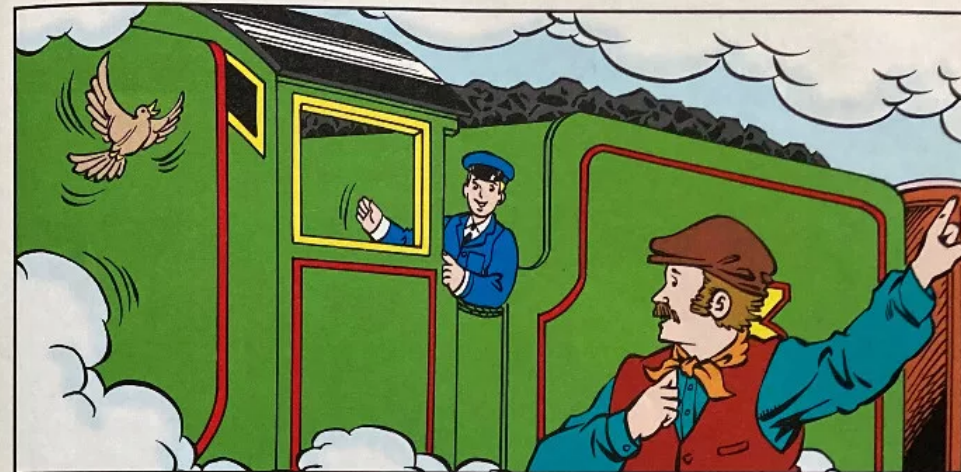
This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prizes lost or damaged in the post. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.

•The Scarecrow Competition!•



1. One day, Henry was slowing down for a country station when he saw an untidy figure in a field. "What a scruffy old man, he needs some new clothes!" he puffed.

2. Henry's driver laughed, "That's no old man, Henry, it's a scarecrow! You're right about it being scruffy though, even for a scarecrow. It looks like it's ready to fall apart!"



3. At the station, Henry's driver saw an old friend get off. "Why, it's Old Farmer Collett! How are you?" he called, and very soon the two friends were chatting away.

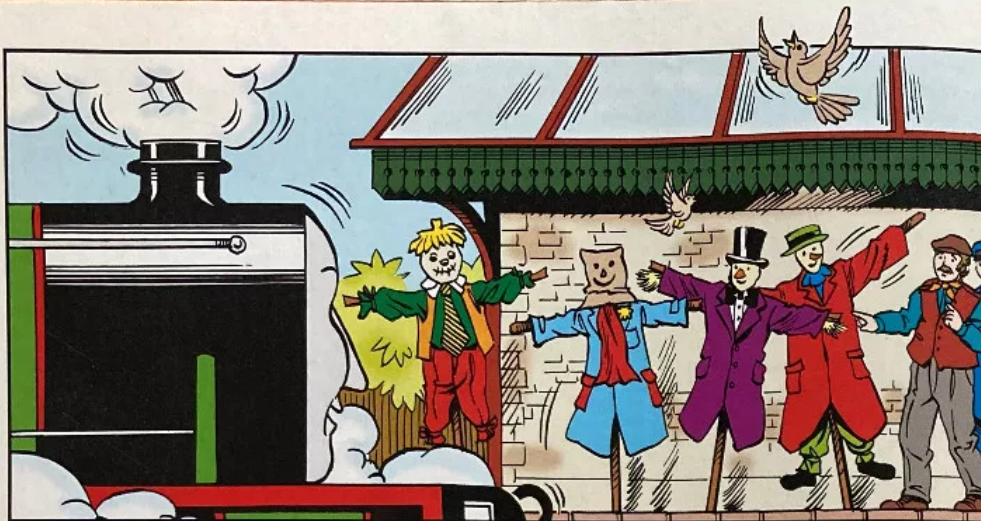
4. "I'm a bit fed-up about the birds eating my seeds!" said the farmer. "You should take your poor old scarecrow out clothes shopping then!" joked Henry's driver.



5. As Henry pulled away he let out a loud whistle. "That should help scare those birds away!" he called. "Good for you, Henry!" shouted the jolly farmer with a wave.



6. Next day, at the same station, Henry saw a notice about a scarecrow competition! His driver smiled. "Old Farmer Collett is no fool, there'll be a reason for this!"



7. The day of the scarecrow competition came and Henry arrived at the station to see lots of different types of scarecrows. "They look like real people!" he whistled.



9. Henry felt honoured! "The one with the big, black beard and moustache would scare any crow!" he whistled. "That one just bought a ticket!" laughed the Stationmaster.

8. Old Farmer Collett was there with the Stationmaster, trying to choose the winner. "They're all so well-dressed they make me feel untidy! Can you help us, Henry?" he called.



10. The man with the beard joined the judges. "I must be very smart indeed if you think I'm the best scarecrow here!" he chuckled. Then he chose the competition winner.



11. The day after the competition, Henry was amazed at what he saw as he passed Old Farmer Collett's field. "Scarecrows everywhere and not a bird in sight!" he said. His driver had to agree. "And you'll never see a smarter bunch of scarecrows anywhere!" he grinned. The clever farmer had carefully arranged the scarecrows all around his field. They all looked very real.

12. The farmer himself was there, too, and Henry's driver called out to him, "I've never seen so many scarecrows in one field! You're a crafty one, Old Farmer Collett!" The farmer grinned. "Well I've never seen so few birds pecking at my seeds!" "You're no fool, Farmer Collett!" whistled Henry. "We knew there was a good reason for the scarecrow competition!"

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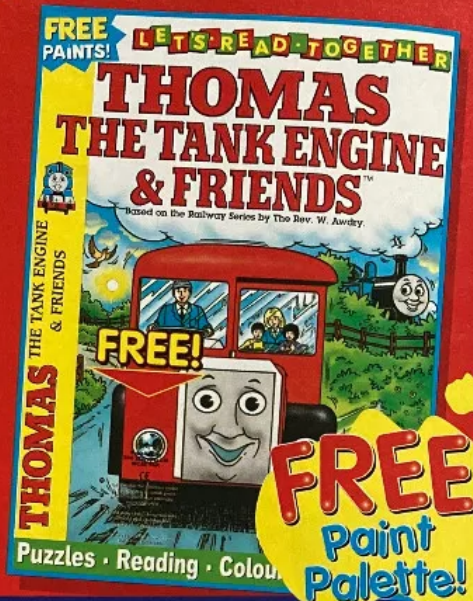
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The mail train!

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Star Letter

Dear Sir Topham Hatt,
Don't take your engines to America.
Sometimes there are tornados over
there which could blow your engines
up and over!

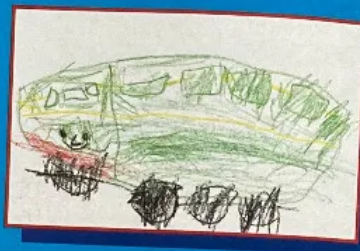
Love from Luke Maitra, aged 4.

*Goodness gracious! Thank you for
the warning, Luke. I most certainly
will not take my engines to America.
We're all quite happy with the
weather on Sodor!*



If we print your **STAR LETTER**, you will receive a splendid Thomas carry case as a prize!

Samuel
Evans drew
Daisy
because
she is his
favourite
engine!



Prize Poem!

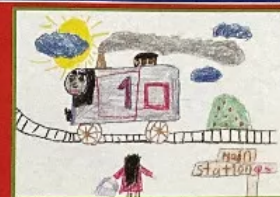
David Egan, aged 6, wins a prize for this terrific poem about George!

George is a grumpy steamroller,
He likes to roll all day.
He doesn't like the railroads,
And he never likes to see
the children play.



Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers!

Thomas is puffing through the sunny countryside in this drawing by 6 year old Lynne Chan.



Thank you, Hannah Brown, for your picture of happy Harold the helicopter!

Anirudh Kumar, aged 4, drew this picture of Rheneas, busy on his mountain line!

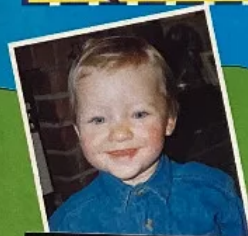


Happy Birthday!

Philip Brown, aged 3,
Cody Nastasia, aged 7,
Charlie Burns, aged 3,
Ross Crellin, aged 3!

Also to
Alex Harris, aged 4,
David Gimblett, aged 6,
and Simon Bush
aged 5!

Peep!
Peep!



Stephen Elrick,
aged 5!



Anna Marie Scott,
aged 3!



Robert Davey,
aged 3!



Nicholas McRoberts,
aged 3!



Joe Cooper,
aged 3!



Charlotte &
Courtney Jacques
aged 5!

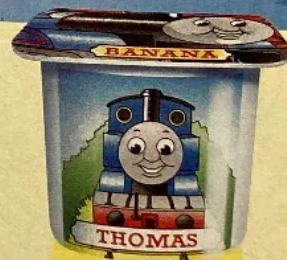




“Peep! Peep! Here comes the train!
And into the tunnel it goes!”

THE new Thomas the Tank Engine range of yogurts and fromages frais are loaded up with all the right goodies, and that includes vitamins and calcium for growing bones and teeth.

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